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# Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Program Brochure

Nova Southeastern University

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# What Is A D.O.?

*I*f you're like most people, you've been going to a doctor ever since you were born, and perhaps were not aware whether you were seeing a D.O. (Osteopathic Physician) or an M.D. (Allopathic Physician). You may not even be aware that there are these two types of complete physicians in the United States.

The fact is, both D.O.s and M.D.s are complete physicians. They are both licensed to perform surgery and prescribe medication in all 50 states. Is there any difference between these two kinds of doctors? Yes. And no.

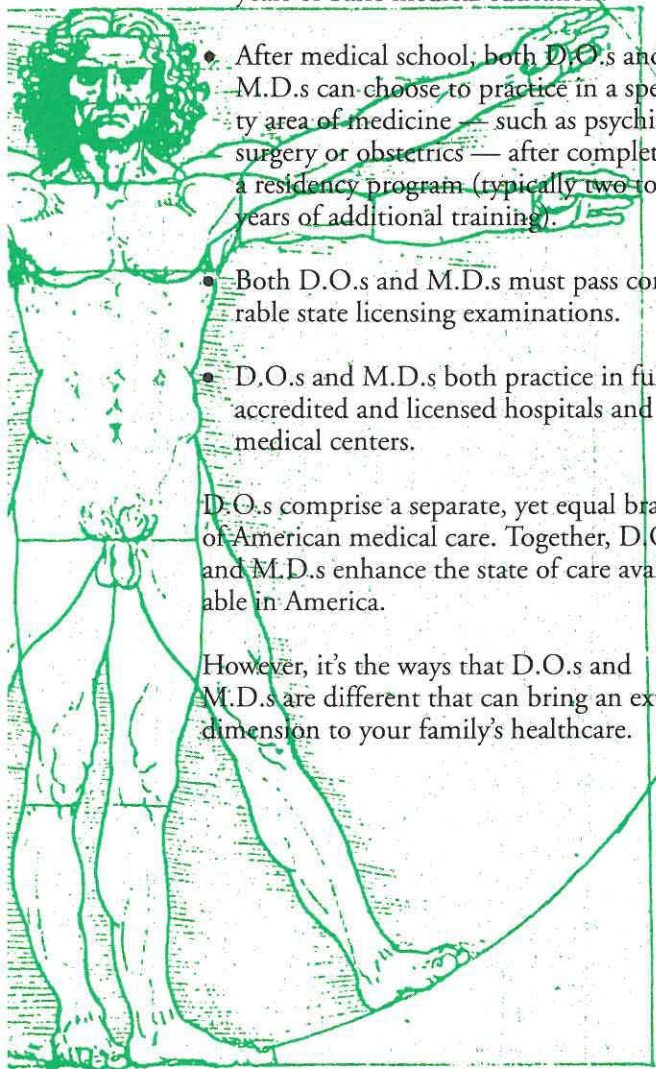
# What Is A D.O.?

## *D.O.s and M.D.s are alike in many ways:*

- Applicants to both D.O. and M.D. colleges typically have a four-year undergraduate degree with an emphasis on science courses.
- Both D.O.s and M.D.s complete four years of basic medical education.
- After medical school, both D.O.s and M.D.s can choose to practice in a specialty area of medicine — such as psychiatry, surgery or obstetrics — after completing a residency program (typically two to six years of additional training).
- Both D.O.s and M.D.s must pass comparable state licensing examinations.
- D.O.s and M.D.s both practice in fully accredited and licensed hospitals and medical centers.

D.O.s comprise a separate, yet equal branch of American medical care. Together, D.O.s and M.D.s enhance the state of care available in America.

However, it's the ways that D.O.s and M.D.s are different that can bring an extra dimension to your family's healthcare.



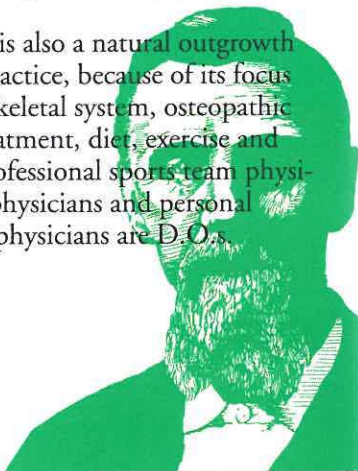
## ***100 Years of Unique Care***

Osteopathic medicine is a unique form of American medical care that was developed in 1874 by Andrew Taylor Still, M.D. Dr. Still was dissatisfied with the effectiveness of 19th Century medicine. He believed that many of the medications of his day were useless or even harmful. Dr. Still was one of the first in his time to study the attributes of good health so that he could better understand the process of disease.

In response Dr. Still founded a philosophy of medicine based on ideas that date back to Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine. The philosophy focuses on the unity of all body parts. He identified the musculoskeletal system as a key element of health. He recognized the body's ability to heal itself and stressed preventive medicine, eating properly and keeping fit.

Dr. Still pioneered the concept of "wellness" 100 years ago. In today's terms, personal health risks — such as smoking, high blood pressure, excessive cholesterol levels, stress and other lifestyle factors — are evaluated for each individual. In coordination with appropriate medical treatment, the osteopathic physician acts as a teacher to help patients take more responsibility for their own wellbeing and change unhealthy patterns.

Sports medicine is also a natural outgrowth of osteopathic practice, because of its focus on the musculoskeletal system, osteopathic manipulative treatment, diet, exercise and fitness. Many professional sports team physicians, Olympic physicians and personal sports medicine physicians are D.O.s.



## ***21st Century, Frontier Medicine***

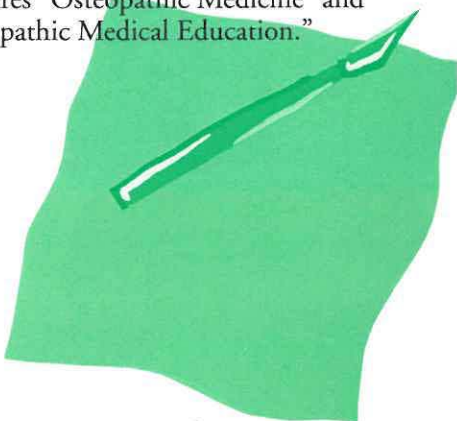
Just as Dr. Still pioneered osteopathic medicine on the Missouri frontier in 1874, today osteopathic physicians serve as modern day medical pioneers.

They continue the tradition of bringing healthcare to areas of greatest need:

- Over half of all osteopathic physicians practice in primary care areas, such as pediatrics, general practice obstetrics/gynecology and internal medicine.
- Many D.O.s fill a critical need for family doctors by practicing in small towns and rural areas.

Today osteopathic physicians continue to be on the cutting edge of modern medicine. D.O.s are able to combine today's awesome medical technology with the tools of their ears, to listen caringly to their patients; their eyes, to see their patients as whole persons; and their hands, to diagnose and treat injury and illness.

Additional information may be found in the American Osteopathic Association's brochures "Osteopathic Medicine" and "Osteopathic Medical Education."





## ***D.O.s bring something extra to medicine:***

- Osteopathic medical schools emphasize training students to be primary care physicians.
- D.O.s practice a “whole person” approach to medicine. Instead of just treating specific symptoms or illnesses, they regard your body as an integrated whole.
- Osteopathic physicians focus on preventive healthcare.
- D.O.s receive extra training in the musculoskeletal system—your body’s interconnected system of nerves, muscles and bones that make up two-thirds of its body mass. This training provides osteopathic physicians with a better understanding of the ways that an injury or illness in one part of your body can affect another. It gives D.O.s a therapeutic and diagnostic advantage over those who do not receive additional specialized training.
- Osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) is incorporated in the training and practice of osteopathic physicians. With OMT, osteopathic physicians use their hands to diagnose injury and illness and to encourage your body’s natural tendency toward good health. By combining all other medical procedures with OMT, D.O.s offer their patients the most comprehensive care available in medicine today.



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